

Columnists

Getting rid of superfluities

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

The point of this discussion is to get rid of superfluities.

Question: Didn't you move recently?

Answer: Yes. On September 26 I moved my worldly goods from Holy Trinity, Webster, to St. Alphonsus, Auburn, 60 miles southeast. Moving was a traumatic and learning experience. Having spent 15 happy years at Holy Trinity rectory, I accumulated an astonishing amount of worldly goods. To begin with, there were 30 cartons of books. While books have always been an important part of my apostolate, many useful books have been resting uselessly on bookshelves for years.

I remember one priest, on being retired, put all his books in a truck and brought them to the dump. Father Leonard Kelly took some 600 books and put them on tables in front of the church in Fairport, then announced at Mass: "Help yourself!" All the books disappeared. When Father Francis Feeney left St. James, Rochester, for Holy Spirit, Penfield, to take up residence with Father Fred Bush, he gave most of his books away. He still buys many books, but gives them away after reading them. When Father Henry Atwell died, he left an impressive library. I was told his relatives invited priests to help themselves. I was sorry not to have been around.

Remembering these, I decided to dispose of over half my books, but wanted them to go where they would be used. Our parish has a fine young engineering student at the University of Rochester, Matt Coriale, who is involved in the Newman Club. He mentioned that Father William Lum, the chaplain, was considering establishing a Catholic library. I suggested: "He is welcome to my books if he will take all of them!" However, he was interested only in books on or by Cardinal John Henry Newman, and I wanted to dispose of all of them.

Q: What did you do?

A: A great-nephew, young Michael Cuddy, recently received his law degree from the University of Buffalo. He is an amiable idealist. In early September, he phoned: "I'd like to come to see you?" I wondered: "Has he some complex problem he wants to discuss?" It

On the Right Side

turned out that all he wanted to make was a friendly visit. I showed him some dozen cartons of books, saying: "I want to dispose of them where they will be used. Could you use them?" He said, "Be glad to have them!" He took the cartons home to Auburn. He sorted them out: some for himself; some for his father, who is head of the Social Studies Department in the Auburn school system; some to my niece Laila, who is with CCD at Sacred Heart, Auburn, and who will dispose of many there; some to a bright nephew, Dan, an accountant — all with the stipulation, "Spread them around!"

Q: Then your trauma became untraumatized?

A: Yes. And it was a learning experience. People should go over their goods and put superfluities into circulation for the good of others. How many closets and attics have too many clothes, shirts, suits, dresses, shoes? Remember Imelda Marcos' 2,000 pairs of shoes with thousands of the poor going shoeless? People who load children with dolls and toys would be kinder to train children to give them to others, rather than build up a mean spirit of acquisitiveness.

Mother Teresa and her sisters each have two habits: one to wear and one to wash and dry. Many of our sisters who have ditched the habits still do keep a kind of evangelical simplicity in their dressing habits. Some do not. Recently, I talked with a bishop from the Third World who remarked with wonder: "I met two religious sisters wearing earrings!" I replied: "Oh, yes. Vatican II opened windows Pope John did not anticipate." We priests sometimes go overboard with superfluities. I admire the Legionaries of Christ, who do manifest the spirit of the Gospel regarding possessions.

Buying the Brooklyn Bridge

By Father Richard P. McBrien

It was raining in Rome on Monday morning, July 18, 1870, after a night of thunder and lightning. St. Peter's Basilica opened at 7:30 a.m., and the council's public session began at 9.

Because of the summer heat, there were fewer visitors than had been present for the opening ceremonies the previous December 8. A votive Mass of the Holy Ghost was celebrated, and then Pope Pius IX entered and donned his pontifical vestments. The Litany of the Saints was chanted, and the pope intoned the hymn "Veni, Creator Spiritus."

The hymn completed, a bishop approached the papal throne and received from the pope the Constitution "Pastor Aeternus," containing the teaching of this, the First Vatican Council, on the infallibility of the pope.

The bishop mounted the pulpit and read the document in a loud and clear voice. Then he put the question formally to the assembled bishops: "Right Reverend Fathers, do the decrees and canons contained in this Constitution please you?"

The voting began. Those in favor voted "placet," Latin for "it pleases," and those opposed voted "non placet."

As the voting proceeded, the storm, which had been threatening all morning, burst with uncommon violence. Thunder shook the basilica and lightning flashed at every window. So it continued for an hour and a half.

When the final vote was tabulated, there were 533 "placets" and only two "non placets." One of the two negative votes was cast by an American bishop, Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Ark.

At least 60 other bishops, including several Americans like Archbishop Peter Kenrick of St. Louis, absented themselves from the session rather than vote "placet." They were among the last holdouts among the council's minority who had worked feverishly to block the definition on the grounds that it was "inopportune" and ecumenically damaging.

Imagine, for a moment, what would happen today if one of the Church's bishops adopted the same negative attitude toward the First Vatican Council as Archbishop Marcel

Essays in Theology

Lefebvre has taken against Vatican II.

Let's suppose there is a Bishop Edward Fitzgerald II, who founds the Fraternity of John XXIII to train priests according to a liberal mode. Let's suppose further that, like Archbishop Lefebvre, our Bishop Fitzgerald begins attacking the First Vatican Council in a way exactly opposite to Lefebvre's attacks on Vatican II.

Where Lefebvre attacked Vatican II for its teaching in support of religious liberty, Fitzgerald attacks Vatican I for its rejection of religious liberty. Where Lefebvre attacked Vatican II for its teaching on ecumenism, Fitzgerald attacks Vatican I for its insensitivity to Protestants and other non-Catholics. Where Lefebvre attacked Vatican II for its teaching on collegiality, Fitzgerald attacks Vatican I for its papal absolutism. And where Lefebvre attacked Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, and even John Paul II as dupes of Communists, humanists, Protestants and assorted secularists, Fitzgerald attacks Pope Pius IX as a pawn of monarchists and other political reactionaries.

Finally, let us suppose that Bishop Fitzgerald threatens, as Archbishop Lefebvre threatened, to ordain his own bishops in order to guarantee the permanence of the Fraternity of John XXIII. Does anyone seriously believe that Bishop Fitzgerald would be invited to Rome again and again to meet with high-ranking curial officials to see if some compromise could be worked out?

Finally, does anyone seriously believe that, once Bishop Fitzgerald broke the bonds of unity with the pope, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger would seek to justify Fitzgerald's complaints against the post-Vatican I Church in a major address to the bishops of Chile?

Believe that, and as the joke goes, I can get you the Brooklyn Bridge cheap.

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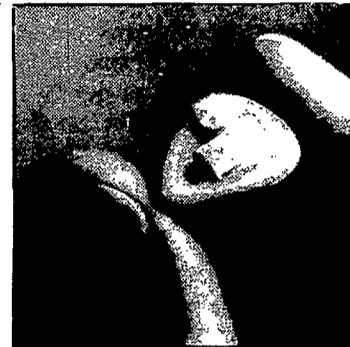
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Check this schedule for event sites & times:

Saturday, Oct. 15

10 a.m., Noon, 2 p.m., "Spirit of Rochester" River Gorge Foliage Cruise* (reservations)

11 a.m., River Gorge Raft Excursion* (reservations)

1-5 p.m., Charlotte Lighthouse Tours

Sunday, Oct. 16

10 a.m., Noon, 2 p.m., "Spirit of Rochester" River Gorge Foliage Cruise* (reservations)

11 a.m., River Gorge Raft Excursion* (reservations)

1-5 p.m., Charlotte Lighthouse Tours, Historic Canoe Exhibit

1-3 p.m., Children's Pumpkin Decorating Contest and River Wildlife Exhibit, Ontario Beach Park

1-3 p.m., Carousel Rides (25¢ cash) Ontario Beach Park

1-3 p.m., Concert by the Shore, Ontario Beach Park, "Al's Cookbook Band"

1 p.m., Rattlesnake Point Fall Walk (meet at Seneca Park Trout Pond)

1:30 p.m., Seneca Park Fall Walk (meet at Trout Pond)

1:30 p.m., Maplewood Park Fall Walk (meet at Rose Garden)

2 p.m., Turning Point Park Fall Walk (meet end of Boxart St.)

2:30 p.m., River Gorge Pedestrian Bridge Rendezvous & Dedication

*Note: Ride the river for \$10 aboard Adventure Calls "Raft Float" (428-6755) or the "Spirit of Rochester" (865-4930).

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